**How to Write a Letter**

The art of writing a letter takes practice, knowledge about proper form and the ability to put into words your feelings, thoughts, and/or ideas. If you learn the basic parts of a letter, it will help you to create letters for a variety of occasions.

**Parts of the Letter:**

**Your address**  
At the top of your letter, you will put your address, so the reader will know where to send their reply to.

**Date**  
Put the date on which the letter was written in the format Month Day Year i.e. June, 15, 2009.

**Inside Address**  
The inside address is only required for a business letter and will include the address of the person you are writing to along with the name of the recipient, their title and company name. If you are not sure who the letter should be addressed to either leave it blank or try to put in a title, i.e. "Director of Human Resources".

**The Greeting**  
The greeting will address the individual that the letter is being sent to. This is usually completed in the form of "Dear Anne" or "Hey Anne", for less formal letters.

**The Introductory Paragraph**  
The first paragraph and will generally outline the purpose for the letter and the reason that the letter is being sent. This can address any issues that are outstanding and is used to set the tone for the entire rest of the letter. In this first paragraph, the summary of the letter can be found and the intentions which will be displayed through the rest of the letter should be outlined. From the first paragraph of the letter, the introductory paragraph, the individual should be able to note the tone of the letter.

**The Body**  
The body of the letter will expand upon the introductory paragraph and the individual can extend their thoughts and feelings further when it comes to the letter. The body of the letter can be anywhere from multiple pages for personal letters, to one page or two pages for most business letters and other types of proposals.

**The Closing**  
In the closing of the letter, the individual will close the letter and finish any thoughts that have been mentioned. The closing of the letter comes in various forms from yours truly, for those individuals that are familiar with one another, to a traditional sincerely which is a versatile closing that can be used in a variety of letters detailing many situations.

**The Presentation of the Letter**  
The presentation of the letter can be hand-written for less formal letters that are addressed to friends and family members, especially thank-you letters. In the case that you have illegible handwriting, you may want to consider typing the letter in these cases, although proper etiquette dictates against this type of behavior.

Formal letters which are written on behalf of businesses to or professional contacts should remain typewritten and grammatical and spelling error free. These types of letters should be legible and professional and therefore typing the letter is one of the most effective ways to ensure that the letter demonstrates a professional appearance through the entire course of the letter, thereby creating a positive impression on the recipient of the letter.

As well as outward presentation, it is important to determine the tone which will be written in the letter, including a professional tone or a tone that will be taken with friends or family members in a more informal setting. Read through the letter once it has been completed to ensure that the tone remains the same. The tone can be adjusted based on the language which is used through the letter, as well as the greetings (familiar as opposed to formal).

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